

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A carrier comprising
a vertical panel,
at least one side wall structure secured to said
vertical panel and foldable onto said vertical panel,
a transverse support panel foldably attached to
said vertical panel and shaped to fit into said side-wall
structure when both said transverse support panel and said side
wall structure are unfolded so as to hold said side wall
structure in an unfolded position and, together with said
transverse support panel, form a receptacle,
a holding structure for supporting said
transverse support panel in a position transverse to said
vertical panel and holding up said transverse support panel
under the load of an object placed in said receptacle upon said
transverse support panel,
said transverse support panel having a surface
for supporting objects resting thereon.

2. A carrier as in Claim 1 including a divider
structure dividing said receptacle into two compartments,

said divider structure being foldably attached to said first support panel and positioned to unfold to provide a side barrier for at least one of said compartments.

3. A carrier as in Claim 2 in which said transverse support panel is a foldable extension of the lower edge of said vertical panel, and said divider structure is a foldable cut-out from said vertical panel and said transverse support panel.

4. A carrier as in Claim 3 in which said cut-out is foldable with respect to said first panel at a location substantially upward from said lower edge of said vertical panel, and with respect to said transverse support panel adjacent its farthest edge from said lower edge.

5. A carrier as in Claim 4 in which said cut-out also is foldable at said lower edge when said cut-out is retracted, and at a location intermediate of said lower edge and said farthest edge so that said divider structure forms a generally L-shaped barrier between said compartments and has an upper side edge serving as a barrier to the sideways movement of a relatively tall object out of one of said compartments, said upper side edge being in-curved to embrace a cylindrical object.

6. A carrier as in Claim 2 in which said divider structure is selected from the group consisting of; a single element forming a side barrier for each of two adjacent compartments; and two separate elements, each selectively forming a side barrier for one of said compartments.

7. A carrier as in Claim 1 including a second vertical panel, the first and said second vertical panels each having an upper edge, said vertical panels being hinged together at said upper edges,

said second vertical panel having a fold-out receptacle for holding objects in it.

8. A carrier as in Claim 7 in which said first and second vertical panels are formed from a single blank with a fold line in said blank forming a hinge at said upper edges.

9. A carrier as in Claim 1 in which said side wall structure includes three side walls hinged together end-to-end and having upper and lower edges, and said holding structure includes foldable flanges comprising extensions from said lower edges of said side walls.

10. A carrier as in Claim 9 including a linking structure linking at least one of said flanges to said

transverse support panel to fold it outwardly from said vertical panel when said side wall structure is unfolded.

11. A carrier as in Claim 10 in which said linking structure comprises one of said flanges secured at one corner to said transverse support structure and folded diagonally along a line traversing said corner when said side wall structure is folded.

12. A carrier as in Claim 9 in which one of said flanges is secured to an adjacent one of said flanges at a corner and is folded diagonally along a line traversing said corner when said side wall structure is folded, whereby the flanges secured together strengthen said holding structure when said side wall structure is unfolded.

13. A carrier as in Claim 7 including cut-outs in said vertical panels adjacent said upper edges and aligned with one another to form a handle.

14. A carrier as in Claim 1 in which said divider structure is formed by a cut-out from a portion of said transverse support panel, whereby said cut-out closes any openings left by said cut-out when folded, to thus form a bottom

for said receptacle which is substantially free of large openings.

15. A carrier as in Claim 1 including a tray with a longitudinal slot in its bottom with said vertical panel extending through said slot.

16. A carrier as in Claim 1 in which said transverse support panel has at least one lock tab extending from one edge, and said side wall structure has at least one slot positioned to engage with said tab to hold said transverse support panel and side wall structure together when unfolded.

17. A carrier comprising
a pair of vertical panels, each having an upper edge and a lower edge,

a foldable receptacle positioned adjacent said lower edge of each of said vertical panels, each of said receptacles capable of being folded against one of said panels and unfolded outwardly from said one panel,

said vertical panels being hinged together adjacent said upper edges.

18. A carrier as in Claim 17 in which each of said vertical panels has a hand hole near said upper edge, said hand

holes being aligned with one another when said vertical panels are together.

19. A carrier as in Claim 17 in which each of said receptacles is selected from the group consisting of; a receptacle with a substantially solid bottom wall for supporting objects thereon; and a receptacle with a bottom wall having holes for holding tapered containers with the bottoms extended downwardly through said holes.

20. A carrier as in Claim 17 including a tray with a slot in its bottom wall and said vertical panels extending through said slot.

21. A carrier as in Claim 17 including graphic matter displayed on at least one of the surfaces of said vertical panels which face one another when said panels are together, whereby said panels can be swung apart to see said graphic matter.

22. An advertising method comprising providing a food carrier for carrying objects by hand, said carrier having a pair of vertical panels, each having an upper edge and a lower edge,

a foldable receptacle positioned adjacent said lower edge of each of said vertical panels, each of said receptacles capable of being folded against one of said panels and unfolded outwardly from said one panel,

said vertical panels being hinged together adjacent said upper edges, and locating advertising on at least one of the surfaces of said panels facing one another when together.

23. A method as in Claim 22 including locating an instruction on the outside of one of said panels and said receptacles instructing the user of said carrier of the matter on said at least one facing panel.

24. A method as in Claim 22 including locating advertising on the other of the facing surfaces of said panels, as well as on the outside surfaces of said panels and said receptacles.

25. A method of distributing food comprising:

(a) providing a food carrier with a vertical support panel structure and a pair of foldable receptacles, each of said receptacles having a substantially closed bottom wall in a first condition, and which is convertible to a receptacle with

retractable side retainers to hold upright containers but with at least one opening in said bottom wall, and

(b) selectively using said side retainers to support upright drink containers, or using one or more of said receptacles to hold solid food, with the retainer thereof folded to close the bottom thereof.

26. A method as in Claim 25 including placing drink containers in said receptacles, with said retainers unfolded, and placing solid food in a tray with a slot in the bottom wall, and inserting said vertical support panel structure through said slot.

27. A method as in Claim 25 including displaying advertising on the outer surfaces of said carrier.

28. A method as in Claim 25 in which said vertical panel support structure includes two panels hinged together at their upper edges, and displaying advertising on at least one of the panel surfaces facing one another when said panels are together.

29. A method of manufacturing a carrier, said carrier having a central vertical panel structure, and foldable

receptacles extendable, when unfolded, from opposite sides of said vertical panel structure,

(a) forming the parts of said carrier of a single sheet with a printable surface, and hinging said parts together using the material of said sheet,

(b) printing in one printing operation graphic matter on said surface of selected ones of said parts, said parts being selected so that the outside surfaces of at least some of said parts bear graphic material when said carrier is assembled from said sheet,

(c) said parts including a pair of vertical panels hinged together along one edge by the material of said sheet,

(d) printing graphic matter on the surfaces of said panels which face one another when said panels are together forming said vertical panel structure, and

(e) assembling said carrier from said parts.

30. A method as in Claim 29 including providing in said blank a side panel hinged to one side edge of each of said vertical panels, and printing graphic matter on said side panels in said one printing operation, whereby said side panels can be

folded over on the undersides of said vertical panels to provide printed matter on both sides of said vertical panels without printing on both sides,

31. A method as in Claim 29 in which parts for the side walls of each of said receptacles comprise

a pair of series of panels hinged to one another and, at one end, to one side edge of one of said vertical panels,

bottom panels hinged to the bottom edges of said vertical panels, and

horizontal support flanges hinged to the lower edges of said side wall panels,

separating said parts from said sheet, bending said side wall panels along the hinge lines and securing one end of each series of panels to one edge opposite said one side edge of one of said vertical panels, and

selectively securing said flanges to one another to form a foldable bottom support structure for said bottom panels.

32. A method of manufacturing a carrier, said carrier having a central vertical panel structure, and foldable

receptacles extendable, when unfolded, from opposite sides of said vertical panel structure,

(a) forming the parts of said carrier of a single sheet

and hinging said parts together using the material of said sheet,

(b) said parts including a pair of vertical panels hinged together along one edge by the material of said sheet,

(c) said parts including a pair of series of panels hinged to one another and, at one end, to one side edge of one of said vertical panels, bottom panels hinged to the bottom edges of said vertical panels, and horizontal support flanges hinged to the lower edges of said side wall panels,

(d) separating said parts from said blank, bending said side wall panels along the hinge lines and securing one end of each series of panels to one edge opposite said one side edge of one of said vertical panels, and

(e) selectively securing said flanges to one another to form a foldable bottom support structure for said bottom panels.

33. A method as in Claim 32 in which said parts include at least one side panel hinged to one side edge of one of said vertical panels and foldable over to cover at least a portion of one surface of one of said vertical panels, said one surface being opposite the surface facing the inner surface of the other of said vertical panels when said vertical panels are together to form said central vertical panel structure.

34. A method as in Claim 32 in which one surface of all of said panels has a finishing coat, and printing graphic matter on selected ones of said surfaces in one step when still in one sheet.